

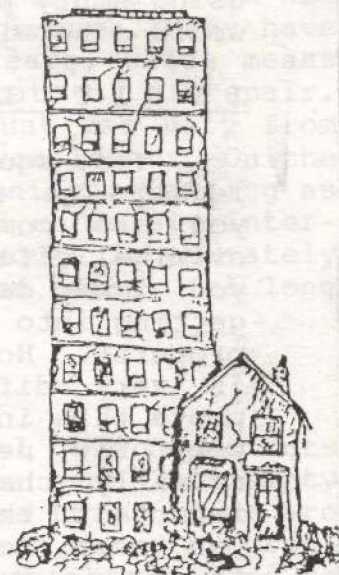
# **Stoke Newington Housing Action**

**SICK OF ...**

**HOMELESSNESS**

**BAD HOUSING**

**HIGH RENT**



**Ever thought of ...**

# **SQUATTING?**



## WHAT IS SQUATTING?

Basically, squatting means getting into a house or flat that is empty and making it your home. Like all other households, squatters have the right to essential services such as electricity, water, post, gas, rubbish collection and so on. Squatting means using empty property to live in, empty property that would otherwise just rot away.

## IS IT LEGAL?

Yes, squatting is legal. The only time you are committing a criminal offence is if you cause damage when getting into the empty property. However, it is very difficult to prove this in court so very few people are actually charged. The important thing that you must remember is to get in quickly and quietly, causing as little damage as possible.



## WHO ARE STOKE NEWINGTON HOUSING ACTION?

Stoke Newington Housing Action is made up of squatters who are committed to helping people escape the total poverty of homelessness and bad housing. We can supply:-

1. an up-to-date list of empty houses and flats;
2. practical help on how to gain entry into empties;
3. advice on gas/electricity problems;
4. basic legal advice;
5. 'The Squatters' Handbook' - a helpful and very practical guide to all aspects of squatting;.
6. other more general information;

But Stoke Newington Housing Action is not an 'estate agents' - we want to help people to help



themselves and we are also committed to challenging the causes of the housing crisis that forces people into squatting.

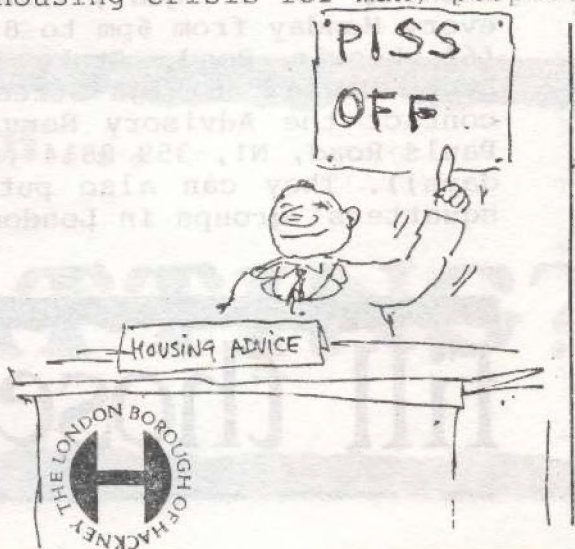
## SQUATTING IN HACKNEY

The majority of squatted houses in Hackney are owned by the council. Some are houses, but most are found on the many estates in the borough. Many have been empty for months and often years, which means that sometimes they're in a bad state of disrepair. The time that you can get in a squat can vary from between 6 months to a year - or even longer. On the whole, the police in Hackney recognise squatting as a symptom of the housing crisis and so rarely intervene. It is also very possible to squat in privately owned places and Housing Association houses (as long as, of course, they're empty).

## HACKNEY COUNCIL

Due to a combination of central government cuts and complete inefficiency, there are over 3000 empty council homes in Hackney. As well as this, there are nearly 5000 empty homes here that are owned by property speculators and Housing Associations. Added to this are the many thousands of people who are homeless or in very poor housing. Squatting is a short term solution to the housing crisis for many people.

Some people say that it's "queue jumping" but that ignores the basic reality of the housing situation - homelessness plus empty homes equals a lot of squatting. It is the government officials, property speculators and the councillors who are the guilty ones, not squatters - because they are the ones responsible for the housing crisis.





## A G R O W I N G S O L U T I O N I N T I M E S O F H A R D H S I P

Finding a decent home is becoming harder and harder - unless you've got loadsamoney! Not only is squatting a solution to the housing crisis, but it also shows that we don't have to rely on rich landlords or useless councils. It's time that we started to take things that we need for ourselves. It is important that we share the knowledge we gain with as many people as possible. We can all help by making lists of empty property, by helping people get in, by getting involved with Stoke Newington Housing Action or other squatters/housing action groups. Squatting is not the problem - the real problem is the housing crisis, the empty homes, the fact that homes are seen in terms of profit and power, not real human need.



If you want to find out more about squatting or are looking for a squat, come to our regular meetings every Monday from 6pm to 8pm at The Old Fire Station (61 Leswin Road, Stoke Newington, N16, just off Stoke Newington High Street). For more information, contact the Advisory Service for Squatters (2a St. Pauls Road, N1, 359 8814 (2pm - 6pm, Mondays to Fridays)). They can also put you in touch with other squatters' groups in London and across the country.

# fill those emptys!